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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE HONORABLE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re the Application of

Michael Weiss, et al.

Application No.: 09/768,129 Examiner: E.G. Milef

Filed: January 23, 2001 Docket No.: PERY 2 00002

For: CACHING MECHANISM TO OPTIMIZE A BIDDING PROCESS USED TO SELECT RESOURCES AND SERVICES

MAIL STOP APPEAL BRIEF – PATENTS
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
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SUBMISSION OF AMENDED APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. 41.37

Applicant submits herewith one copy of Amended Appeal Brief Under 37 C.F.R. §41.37 for the above-referenced patent application in response to the Notification of Non-Compliant Appeal Brief mailed May 4, 2006.

Applicant hereby petitions the Commissioner under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) and requests a one month extension of time up to and including at least July 4, 2006 to file this Appeal Brief. Fees in the amount of $120.00 are to be charged as indicated on the attached PTO-2038 Credit Card Payment form. Please charge Deposit Account No. 06-0308 for any fee deficiency.

Appellant files this Amended Appeal Brief in response to the notification, which asserts that the means plus function of claim 17 on page 3 of the Appeal Brief is not properly identified. The means plus function under 35 U.S.C. 112 sixth paragraph must be described in the specification with reference to the specification page and line number, and to the drawings, if any, by reference characters. Applicants have complied with this requirement. It should be noted that there are very few reference numerals in this patent application. In particular, the only reference numerals applicable to claim 17

would be to predetermined contexts 1 and 2. As such, the concise explanation of the subject matter of claim 17 includes reference to the specification page and line number, and to the drawings, and any reference characters where applicable. It is believed that the appeal brief is now in compliance with the applicable rules.

Respectfully submitted,

6/16/06
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PATENT APPLICATION

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AMENDED APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. 41.37

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I. TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

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II. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest for this appeal and the present application is Mitel Networks Corporation, by way of an Assignment recorded in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office at Reel 016345, Frame 0283.

III. STATEMENT OF RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no prior or pending appeals, interferences or judicial proceedings, known to Appellants, Appellants' representative, or the Assignee, that may be related to, or which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing upon the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

IV. STATUS OF CLAIMS

All pending claims (1-17) have been finally rejected in the Office Action dated October 5, 2005.

Appellants appeal the rejection of the pending claims, namely, claims 1-17.

V. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

A Request for Reconsideration was filed November 16, 2005, and an Advisory Action was issued December 14, 2005. The Advisory Action indicated that the Request for Reconsideration did not place the application in condition for allowance.

No Amendment After Final Rejection was filed. Accordingly, the claims presented in the Preliminary Amendment filed September 3, 2003 and examined in the Final Office Action are those presented in the Appendix. No claim amendments were submitted with the Notice of Appeal.

VI. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

A concise explanation of the subject matter defined in each of the independent claims involved in the appeal (1, 8 and 17) is provided.

The claims do not stand or fall together. Each claim is to be considered by the Board in view of the arguments and comments submitted herein.

The subject matter of Claim 1 is directed to a multi-agent caching system for optimizing a bidding process for resources. The system comprises a bid manager agent for issuing a call for bids for usage of said resources, receiving said bids and selecting a best bid from among said bids, wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context (pg. 4, lines 22-24); a plurality of bidder agents for issuing said bids according to predetermined bidding policies in response to said call for bids, wherein one of said bidder agents issues said best bid and provides said resources upon selection of said best bid by said bid_manager (pg. 4, lines 25-27); and a plurality of resource_adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources (pg. 5, lines 30-31), one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidder agents, and for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidder agents to issue said bids (pg. 6, lines 12-24 and FIGS. 2A, 2B and 3), and a no-caching adapter for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents and sending said bids to said bid manager (pg. 6, lines 12-24 and FIGS. 2A, 2B and 3).

The subject matter of Claim 8 is directed to an optimized method of acquiring bids from a plurality of bidder agents for resources (see pg. 9, line 8 to pg. 11, line 15, and FIGS. 11 and 12). The method comprises the steps of: issuing a request for bids for usage of said resources, wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context; accessing a cache of stored bids and related contexts to determine whether said cache contains bids defining said predetermined context; issuing a call for bids to said bidder agents in connection with which no bids defining said predetermined context are stored in said cache, in response to which said bidder agents return bids to said bid manager

and said bids are stored in said cache along with said predetermined context; and retrieving from said cache said bids defining said predetermined context previously stored by said bidder agents.

The subject matter of claim 17 is directed to an apparatus for optimizing a bidding process for resources (see pg. 3, line 30 to pg. 6, line 24, and FIGS. 1-3). The apparatus comprises: a bid manager agent (pg. 4, lines 22-24, and FIGS. 1-3) comprising means for issuing a call to bidder agents for bids for usage of said resources (pg. 4, lines 22-24, and FIG. 1), means for receiving said bids and means for selecting a best bid from among said bids (pg. 4, lines 22-24, and FIG. 1), wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context 1 or 2 (pg. 4, lines 3-13 and FIGS. 7-10); a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources (pg. 5, lines 30-31, and FIGS. 2, 2A, and 2B), one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter (pg. 6, lines 12-21, and FIG. 2B) comprising means for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts 1 or 2 from predetermined ones of said bidder agents (pg. 4, lines 29-31, FIG. 2B), receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidder agents to issue said bids (pg. 6, lines 12-24, and FIGS. 2A, 2B, 3, and 9), and a no-caching adapter (pg. 6, lines 12-21, and FIG. 2B) comprising means for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids (pg. 6, lines 12-21, and FIG. 2B), re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents (pg. 6, lines 12-21, and FIG. 2B), receiving said bids from said ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents and sending said bids to said bid manager (pg. 6, lines 12-21, and FIGS. 2A, 2B and 3).

VII. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

The following grounds of rejection are presented for review:

A) Whether claims 1-7 are unpatentable as having been obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Baindur, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,073,176).

B) Whether claims 8-16 are unpatentable as having been obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Baindur, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,073,176).

C) Whether claim 17 is unpatentable as having been obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Baindur, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,073,176).

VIII. ARGUMENT

A. Claims 1-17 Would Not Have Been Obvious Over Baindur, et al.

Claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as the Examiner asserts that these claims are unpatentable over United States Patent No. 6,073,176 to Baindur et al. Applicants submit that the Examiner's rejection of these claims is traversed as set forth below.

Independent claim 1 recites as follows:

> 1. A multi-agent caching system for optimizing a bidding process for resources, comprising:
>
> a bid manager agent for issuing a call for bids for usage of said resources, receiving said bids and selecting a best bid from among said bids, wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context;
>
> a plurality of bidder agents for issuing said bids according to predetermined bidding policies in response to said call for bids, wherein one of said bidder agents issues said best bid and provides said resources upon selection of said best bid by said bid manager; and
>
> a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidders, receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidders to issue said bids, and a no-caching adapter for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidders other than said predetermined bidders, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidders other than said predetermined bidders and sending said bids to said bid manager.

Thus, claim 1 clearly requires "a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program manager of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidders, receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidders to issue said bids and a no-caching adapter for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidders other than said predetermined bidders, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidders other than said predetermined bidders and sending said bids to said bid manager." The Baindur reference fails to teach or suggest any such resource adapters.

The Examiner has attempted to refute applicants' argument that Baindur (U.S. Pat. No. 6,073,176) fails to teach or suggest "resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources" as recited in claim 1 by suggesting that Baindur discloses "interfaces with various servers and clients" implemented "using a different programming methodology" that nonetheless perform "that which is described in claim 1." Yet, the Examiner has not in any way identified where in Baindur the "interfaces with various servers and clients" provide "a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources," as recited in claim 1.

Second, the resource adapters of applicants' claim 1 include a caching adapter "for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts." Such a caching adapter is not taught or suggested anywhere in the Baindur reference. The Examiner does not contest applicants' submission that Baindur does not teach or suggest this recited feature. Indeed, the words "cache" or "cached" do not appear anywhere in the Baindur citation. However, the Examiner dismisses this shortcoming by stating simply that "[a]ll computer systems use cache systems including the 'dynamic' bidding system taught by Baindur." (See pg. 2 of Advisory Action.) While caching systems are well known in the computer arts, applicants respectfully submit that the use of a caching adapter "for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts" is completely unknown in the art and, as indicated above, is completely absent from Baindur.

In fact, such a caching adapter could not be used in the system taught by Baindur. As the Examiner has previously indicated, Baindur teaches that each bid is based on dynamic bid weighting criteria that varies depending on the status of the system at the time the bid request is initiated. Clearly, the bid weighting (and thus the resulting bid) varies depending on the time the bid request is initiated according to Baindur. Thus, Baindur teaches a system with bids that are "dynamic" and therefore it would serve no purpose to cache such a bid given that the bid would clearly change based on the time the next bid request is initiated.

It is evident from the above that not only does Baindur fail to teach or suggest the elements as recited in independent claim 1, but Baindur in fact teaches away from the present invention. It is therefore believed that Baindur cannot possibly render the present claims obvious.

In rejecting the claims, the Examiner has asserted that "the multi-agent caching system can be just a series of standard physical inboxes to hold the bids of different bidders, in which bids could be stored by any variety of criteria." Applicants disagree with the Examiner as the invention recited in independent claim 1 cannot possibly be equated to a series of inboxes for holding bids. The plurality of resource adapters as recited in independent claim 1 cannot possibly be equated to a series of inboxes.

Notwithstanding the above, the Examiner has not shown any prior art system in which there is provided "a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidders, receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidders to issue said bids and a no-caching adapter for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidders other than said predetermined bidders, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidders other than said predetermined bidders and sending said bids to said bid manager." Instead, the Examiner simply makes the sweeping statement that such would be obvious. The Examiner has therefore failed to set forth a sufficient basis upon which to maintain the rejection of these claims.

Such sweeping statements by the Examiner clearly amount to a "hindsight" analysis in determining obviousness that the courts have frequently warned against (see, for example, *Diamond Rubber Co. v. Consolidated Rubber Tire Co.*, 220 U.S. 428 (1911)), as noted in *In re Mahurkar Patent Litigation* 831 F. Supp. 1354, 28 USPQ 2d 180 (N.D. Ill. 1993)). The Examiner has traversed applicants' argument that his conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning by noting that "so long as [the hindsight reconstruction] takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper." *In Re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). From the arguments presented above, it is clear that the use of a caching adapter within a multi-agent caching system "for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts" falls squarely into the realm of "knowledge gleaned only

from the applicant's disclosure." Therefore, the Examiner's legal reasoning is manifestly wrong.

As applicants consider all of the Examiner's arguments traversed, the rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) must be reversed.

B. Claims 8-16 Would Not Have Been Obvious Over Baindur, et al.

Independent claim 8 recites an optimized method of acquiring bids from a plurality of bidder agents for resources. More particularly, claim 8 includes the steps of:

> accessing a cache of stored bids and related contexts to determine whether said cache contains bids defining said predetermined context;
>
> issuing a call for bids to said bidder agents in connection with which no bids defining said predetermined context are stored in said cache, in response to which said bidder agents return bids to said bid manager and said bids are stored in said cache along with said predetermined context; and
>
> retrieving from said cache said bids defining said predetermined context previously stored by said bidder agents.

The Examiner's rejection of claim 8 relies upon many of the portions of Baindur that have been cited by the Examiner in rejecting claim 1. The Baindur reference, however, fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 8 noted above.

Such features as "accessing a cache of stored bids and related contexts," "issuing a call for bids," and "retrieving from said cache said bids defining said predetermined context previously stored by said bidder agents" are not taught or suggested anywhere in the Baindur reference. Indeed, the words "cache" or "cached" do not appear anywhere in the Baindur citation. However, the Examiner dismisses this shortcoming by stating simply that all computer systems use cache systems "including the 'dynamic' bidding system taught by Baindur." While caching systems are well known in the computer arts, applicants respectfully submit that the use of such systems for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts is completely unknown in the art and, as indicated above, is completely absent from Baindur.

In fact, such a system could not be used in the system taught by Baindur. As the Examiner has previously indicated, Baindur teaches that each bid is based on dynamic

bid weighting criteria that varies depending on the status of the system at the time the bid request is initiated. Clearly, the bid weighting (and thus the resulting bid) varies depending on the time the bid request is initiated according to Baindur. Thus, Baindur teaches a system with bids that are "dynamic" and therefore it would serve no purpose to cache such a bid given that the bid would clearly change based on the time the next bid request is initiated.

It is evident from the above that not only does Baindur fail to teach or suggest the elements as recited in independent claim 8, but Baindur in fact teaches away from the present invention. It is therefore believed that Baindur cannot possibly render the present claim obvious.

In rejecting the claim, the Examiner has asserted that "the multi-agent caching system can be just a series of standard physical inboxes to hold the bids of different bidders, in which bids could be stored by any variety of criteria." Applicants disagree with the Examiner as the invention recited in independent claim 8 cannot possibly be equated to a series of inboxes for holding bids.

The Examiner simply makes the sweeping statement that such method would be obvious. The Examiner has therefore failed to set forth a sufficient basis upon which to maintain the rejection of these claims.

Such sweeping statements by the Examiner clearly amount to a "hindsight" analysis in determining obviousness that the courts have frequently warned against (see, for example, *Diamond Rubber Co. v. Consolidated Rubber Tire Co.*, 220 U.S. 428 (1911)), as noted in *In re Mahurkar Patent Litigation* 831 F. Supp. 1354, 28 USPQ 2d 180 (N.D. Ill. 1993)). The Examiner has traversed applicants' argument that his conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning by noting that "so long as [the hindsight reconstruction] takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper." *In Re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). From the arguments presented above, it is clear that the use of a multi-agent caching system of stored bids and related contexts that may be used to determine whether the cache contains bids defining the predetermined context falls squarely into

the realm of "knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure." Therefore, the Examiner's legal reasoning is incorrect.

As applicants consider all of the Examiner's arguments traversed, the rejection of claims 8-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) must be reversed.

C. Claim 17 Would Not Have Been Obvious Over Baindur, et al.

Independent claim 17 recites an apparatus for optimizing a bidding process for resources. More particularly, claim 17 includes "a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter comprising means for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidder agents, receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidder agents to issue said bids, and a no-caching adapter comprising means for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents and sending said bids to said bid manager."

The Examiner's rejection of claim 17 relies upon many of the portions of Baindur that have been cited by the Examiner in rejecting claim 1.

The Baindur reference fails to teach or suggest any such resource adapters. The Examiner has attempted to refute applicants' argument that Baindur (U.S. Pat. No. 6,073,176) fails to teach or suggest resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources" as recited in claim 17 by suggesting that Baindur discloses "interfaces with various servers and clients" implemented "using a different programming methodology" that nonetheless perform the claimed functions. Yet, the Examiner has not in any way identified where in Baindur the "interfaces with various servers and clients" provide "a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources," as recited in claim 17.

Second, the resource adapters of applicants' claim 17 include a caching adapter "comprising means for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts." Such a caching adapter is not taught or suggested anywhere in the Baindur reference. The

Examiner does not contest applicants' submission that Baindur does not teach or suggest this recited feature. Indeed, the words "cache" or "cached" do not appear anywhere in the Baindur citation. However, the Examiner dismisses this shortcoming by stating simply that all computer systems use cache systems "including the 'dynamic' bidding system taught by Baindur." While caching systems are well known in the computer arts, applicants respectfully submit that the use of a caching adapter "for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts" is completely unknown in the art and, as indicated above, is completely absent from Baindur.

In fact, such a caching adapter could not be used in the system taught by Baindur. As the Examiner has previously indicated, Baindur teaches that each bid is based on dynamic bid weighting criteria that varies depending on the status of the system at the time the bid request is initiated. Clearly, the bid weighting (and thus the resulting bid) varies depending on the time the bid request is initiated according to Baindur. Thus, Baindur teaches a system with bids that are "dynamic" and therefore it would serve no purpose to cache such a bid given that the bid would clearly change based on the time the next bid request is initiated.

It is evident from the above that not only does Baindur fail to teach or suggest the elements as recited in independent claim 17, but Baindur in fact teaches away from the present invention. It is therefore believed that Baindur cannot possibly render the present claim obvious.

In rejecting the claim, the Examiner has asserted that "the multi-agent caching system can be just a series of standard physical inboxes to hold the bids of different bidders, in which bids could be stored by any variety of criteria." Applicants disagree with the Examiner as the invention recited in independent claim 17 cannot possibly be equated to a series of inboxes for holding bids. The plurality of resource adapters as recited in independent claim 17 cannot possibly be equated to a series of inboxes. Notwithstanding the above, the Examiner has not shown any prior art system in which there is provided "a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter comprising means for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidder agents, receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager

instead of requiring said predetermined bidder agents to issue said bids, and a no-caching adapter comprising means for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents and sending said bids to said bid manager." Instead, the Examiner simply makes the sweeping statement that such would be obvious. The Examiner has therefore failed to set forth a sufficient basis upon which to maintain the rejection of these claims.

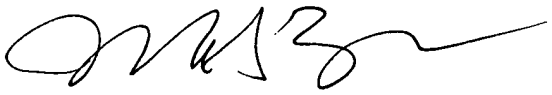
Such sweeping statements by the Examiner clearly amount to a "hindsight" analysis in determining obviousness that the courts have frequently warned against (see, for example, *Diamond Rubber Co. v. Consolidated Rubber Tire Co.*, 220 U.S. 428 (1911)), as noted in *In re Mahurkar Patent Litigation* 831 F. Supp. 1354, 28 USPQ 2d 180 (N.D. Ill. 1993)). The Examiner has traversed applicants' argument that his conclusion of obviousness is based upon improper hindsight reasoning by noting that "so long as [the hindsight reconstruction] takes into account only knowledge which was within the level of ordinary skill at the time the claimed invention was made, and does not include knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure, such a reconstruction is proper." *In Re McLaughlin*, 443 F.2d 1392, 170 USPQ 209 (CCPA 1971). From the arguments presented above, it is clear that the use of a caching adapter within a multi-agent caching system "comprising means for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts" falls squarely into the realm of "knowledge gleaned only from the applicant's disclosure." Therefore, the Examiner's legal reasoning is incorrect.

As applicants consider all of the Examiner's arguments traversed, the rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) must be reversed.

IX. CONCLUSION

For all of the reasons discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections are in error and that claims 1-17 are in condition for allowance. For all of the above reasons, Appellants respectfully request this Honorable Board to reverse the rejections of claims 1-17.

Respectfully submitted,



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Filed: 6/16/06

CLAIMS APPENDIX

CLAIMS INVOLVED IN THE APPEAL:

1. (Previously Presented) A multi-agent caching system for optimizing a bidding process for resources, comprising:

a bid manager agent for issuing a call for bids for usage of said resources, receiving said bids and selecting a best bid from among said bids, wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context;

a plurality of bidder agents for issuing said bids according to predetermined bidding policies in response to said call for bids, wherein one of said bidder agents issues said best bid and provides said resources upon selection of said best bid by said bid_manager; and

a plurality of resource_adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidder agents, and for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidder agents to issue said bids, and a no-caching adapter for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents and sending said bids to said bid manager.

2. (Previously Presented) The multi-agent caching system of claim 1, wherein said caching adapter updates said cached bids in response to new contexts of said bids.

3. (Previously Presented) The multi-agent caching system of claim 1, wherein said bid manager selects said best bid by sorting said resource adapters

according to decreasing values of said bids and selecting a first available one of said bidder agents according to said resource adapters as sorted.

4. (Original) The multi-agent caching system of claim 1, wherein each said context is defined by a discrete parameter value.

5. (Previously Presented) The multi-agent caching system of claim 1, wherein each said bidder agent sends a notification message to said bid manager agent in the event of any changes to its bidding policies, in response to which said bid manager agent updates said caching adapter.

6. (Previously Presented) The multi-agent caching system of claim 5, wherein said bidding policies are stored via said caching adapter as entries in a table and said bid manager agent updates individual ones of said cached bids to reflect said changes in said bidding policies.

7. (Previously Presented) The multi-agent caching system of claim 5, wherein said bidding policies are stored via said caching adapter as general rules and said bid manager agent clears all of said cached bids.

8. (Previously Presented) An optimized method of acquiring bids from a plurality of bidder agents for resources, comprising the steps of:

issuing a request for bids for usage of said resources, wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context;

accessing a cache of stored bids and related contexts to determine whether said cache contains bids defining said predetermined context;

issuing a call for bids to said bidder agents in connection with which no bids defining said predetermined context are stored in said cache, in response to which said bidder agents return bids to said bid manager and said bids are stored in said cache along with said predetermined context; and

retrieving from said cache said bids defining said predetermined context previously stored by said bidder agents.

9. (Original) The optimized method of claim 8, further comprising the step of updating said stored bids in response to new contexts of said bids.

10. (Previously Presented) The optimized method of claim 8, further comprising the step of selecting a best bid by sorting said bids according to decreasing values of said bids and selecting a first available one of said bidder agents according to said sorting.

11. (Original) The optimized method of claim 8, wherein each said context is defined by a discrete parameter value.

12. (Original) The optimized method of claim 8, further comprising the step of sending a notification message to said bid manager in the event of any changes to its bidding policies, in response to which said bid manager updates said cache.

13. (Original) The optimized method of claim 12, further comprising the step of storing said bidding policies as entries in a table.

14. (Original) The optimized method of claim 13, further comprising the step of updating individual ones of said cached bids for updating said cache to reflect said changes in said bidding policies.

15. (Original) The optimized method of claim 12, further comprising the step of storing said bidding policies as general rules.

16. (Original) The optimized method of claim 15, further comprising the step of clearing all of said cached bids for updating said cache to reflect said changes in said bidding policies.

17 (Previously Presented) An apparatus for optimizing a bidding process for resources, the apparatus comprising:

a bid manager agent comprising means for issuing a call to bidder agents for bids for usage of said resources, means for receiving said bids and means for selecting a best bid from among said bids, wherein each of said bids defines a predetermined context;

a plurality of resource adapters for providing a uniform interface to access application program interfaces of said resources, one of said resource adapters being a caching adapter comprising means for maintaining cached bids for predetermined contexts from predetermined ones of said bidder agents, receiving from said bid manager said call for bids and issuing said cached bids to said bid manager instead of requiring said predetermined bidder agents to issue said bids, and a no-caching adapter comprising means for receiving from said bid manager said call for bids, re-issuing said call for bids to ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents, receiving said bids from said ones of said bidder agents other than said predetermined bidder agents and sending said bids to said bid manager.

EVIDENCE

Not applicable.

RELATED

Not applicable.